

Minutes: Russell Township Zoning Commission  
Russell Town Hall  
March 27, 2024

Present: Mr. Barry Rogers, Chairman  
Mr. Jim Dickinson  
Dr. Chris Stormann  
Mr. Nathan Wynveen

Also in attendance: Mr. Shane Wrench, Zoning Inspector; Mrs. Cathleen Birli, Zoning Secretary

Mr. Ben Kotowski joined the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 6:06 p.m.

The 2023 Schedule, Sunshine Notice, was announced in the Chagrin Valley Times and the Geauga Maple Leaf, Thursday, December 21, 2023.

---

### **Resolution Book Updating**

Ms. Kristina Port, Trustee Chairman joined the meeting to discuss comments/concerns from the Trustee meeting March 21, 2024. She thanked the Board for all their hard work putting together the Resolution Book Revisions.

Ms. Port addressed some concerns including updating solar panels, updating lighting, Air BNB's, and marijuana dispensaries. The Board agreed.

Mr. Rogers summarized comments from the Trustee meeting he attended, March 21, 2024.

See attached.

Ms. Port would like another final edit from the Board for a Trustee review before an Amendment is adopted.

Mr. Wynveen stated the Russell Township Land Use Guide Plan is essential for the protection of Russell Townships integrity now and in the future. The Board agreed.

Mr. Dickinson said that every 20 years or so the same response, keeping Russell Township rural, is the number one response.

Dr. Stormann will obtain the Russell Township Land Use Survey Report.

---

**Public Input**

Mr. Charlie Butter, River Glen.

Mr. Butters stated that the Lighting Resolution pre-dates zoning and will not be enforceable.

---

**Minutes:**

*Mr. Wynveen made the motion to accept the minutes from the February 28, 2024 meeting, as amended, Mr. Dickinson seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

*There being no other business, Mr. Rogers adjourned the meeting at 7:20 p.m.*

Respectfully Submitted,

Mrs. Cathleen Birli 4-24-24  
Mrs. Cathleen Birli Date  
Zoning Commission Secretary

Barry Rogers 4-29-24  
Mr. Barry Rogers Date  
Chairman

## Notes from Trustees Meeting March 21, 2024 re Trustees Review of Proposed ZR Amendments

Received marked sections of ZR from 2 of the 3 Trustees – discussed select comments, focusing on items that both commented on.

1. (2.1)- Outdoor shooting range – clarify that restriction does not apply to residential.
2. (2.2)- Gender statement - Christina had marked many instances of his and he – they will accept our gender statement but we need to move it to the beginning of the section and highlight it in some way.
3. Definitions – markups requested many more definitions (crawl space, steps, etc). After discussion, they accept that not all word can be defined – legally defers to “man on the street interpretation”. They liked our plan to highlight the words that are defined.
4. Graphics in section 2- question on corner lots – apparently the text on the graphics is too light to read – did not see the two “front yards” on the corner lot. Need to improve the graphics.
5. Questioned the 24’ aisle width in commercial parking vs roads that are 20’ per county engineer. After discussion with turning movements in a lot, they accepted the 24’ as written.
6. Comments on noise – explained that we have not been able to define limits of noise at this time - perhaps for the next revision. Accepted.
7. Glare – discussed. They liked the quantification of glare, noting that Shane needed to purchase a light meter. During public comments, Charlie stated that “watts was inappropriate to cite – lumens is the correct terminology”. Need to review language.
8. I explained that fences were included, but did not have defined limits for heights – they liked out approach.
9. They circled “alternate members” for both ZC and BZA. I explained ORC language – after discussion they accepted as written.
10. (6.5)- Private Schools “objectional noise” – they tagged it, asking how it was defined. We discussed that the language provided some leverage if noise was an issue. They accepted.
11. (4.7)- Lighting plans are only required for non-residential developments – need to check language and clarify.

12. (4.4.H)- Residential driveway width – explained 10’ minimum per Fire Dept, but no restriction on offset from property lines. They asked about gravel – yes, not changed from prior. They agreed to our approach.
13. (4.7.Z)- Pods – both asked about Pods – they requested clarification language that Pods were to be allowed for up to 90 days (much discussion, they settled on 90 days).
14. (4.7.E)- Outside brush burning with Fire Department approval. They questioned what could be burned – brush. Asst Fire Chief explained that there Burn Permit follows Ohio EPA rules, and is sent from Fire Department to County. Permit is issued with rules, including only brush can be burned; not burning when dry ban; etc. The Burn Permit is good for one year. We are good as written.
15. (4.11)- Discussed that Political signs can’t be regulated and that we followed county guidelines for signs. They requested rewrite of freestanding and mobile signs, saying language cross-referenced each other. They also requested that inflatable signs be allowed in other than residential districts.
16. (6.5.I) Initial comments about Adult Businesses – asking us to review the language. Discussed and they accepted as is. They noted that the original language was constructed such that several lots in the townships did meet the requirements of this section, but the Township owned them all.
17. (4.7.M to Q) Commented on Prohibition of Auto Parts, Machinery Rental shops, etc. After discussion, they accepted as is, which is unchanged from existing.
18. (4.13) Multiple mark-ups on storm water management - discussed and explained that we received editing direct from Carmella – they accepted that.
19. I asked about removal of golf courses and air strips – they confirmed agreement.
20. Markups and changes proposed for Junk and Junk Vehicles – I explained the language was exactly per the current ORC – they accepted.
21. Several comments about what was the action if resident did not comply to “have xx days to correct/finish” – I explained that there is a process involving first Shane and then county. They accepted.
22. Comments about publishing minutes and other items on the Township website – we say may be published – they want shall be published. I explained that we additionally had to follow ORC to publish notice in newspapers, etc.

23. I asked about next steps – did they want reply to each comment? They requested and opportunity to read a rewrite before we go to public meeting and county.
24. They were concerned about the listing of duties of Zoning Inspector – Shane said was generally in line, but we should review.
25. Jim asked about Mother-in-law suites, and asked that we review our language for clarity.
26. Chistina asked that we review language about non-conforming situation as in what can be rebuilt after a fire.

## Notes from Trustees Meeting March 21, 2024 re Trustees Review of Proposed ZR Amendments

Received marked sections of ZR from 2 of the 3 Trustees – discussed select comments, focusing on items that both commented on.

1. (2.1)- Outdoor shooting range – clarify that restriction does not apply to residential.
2. (2.2)- Gender statement - Christina had marked many instances of his and he – they will accept our gender statement but we need to move it to the beginning of the section and highlight it in some way.
3. Definitions – markups requested many more definitions (crawl space, steps, etc). After discussion, they accept that not all word can be defined – legally defers to “man on the street interpretation”. They liked our plan to highlight the words that are defined.
4. Graphics in section 2- question on corner lots – apparently the text on the graphics is too light to read – did not see the two “front yards” on the corner lot. Need to improve the graphics.
5. Questioned the 24’ aisle width in commercial parking vs roads that are 20’ per county engineer. After discussion with turning movements in a lot, they accepted the 24’ as written.
6. Comments on noise – explained that we have not been able to define limits of noise at this time - perhaps for the next revision. Accepted.
7. Glare – discussed. They liked the quantification of glare, noting that Shane needed to purchase a light meter. During public comments, Charlie stated that “watts was inappropriate to cite – lumens is the correct terminology”. Need to review language.
8. I explained that fences were included, but did not have defined limits for heights – they liked out approach.
9. They circled “alternate members” for both ZC and BZA. I explained ORC language – after discussion they accepted as written.
10. (6.5)- Private Schools “objectional noise” – they tagged it, asking how it was defined. We discussed that the language provided some leverage if noise was an issue. They accepted.
11. (4.7)- Lighting plans are only required for non-residential developments – need to check language and clarify.

12. (4.4.H)- Residential driveway width – explained 10’ minimum per Fire Dept, but no restriction on offset from property lines. They asked about gravel – yes, not changed from prior. They agreed to our approach.
13. (4.7.Z)- Pods – both asked about Pods – they requested clarification language that Pods were to be allowed for up to 90 days (much discussion, they settled on 90 days).
14. (4.7.E)- Outside brush burning with Fire Department approval. They questioned what could be burned – brush. Asst Fire Chief explained that there Burn Permit follows Ohio EPA rules, and is sent from Fire Department to County. Permit is issued with rules, including only brush can be burned; not burning when dry ban; etc. The Burn Permit is good for one year. We are good as written.
15. (4.11)- Discussed that Political signs can’t be regulated and that we followed county guidelines for signs. They requested rewrite of freestanding and mobile signs, saying language cross-referenced each other. They also requested that inflatable signs be allowed in other than residential districts.
16. (6.5.I) Initial comments about Adult Businesses – asking us to review the language. Discussed and they accepted as is. They noted that the original language was constructed such that several lots in the townships did meet the requirements of this section, but the Township owned them all.
17. (4.7.M to Q) Commented on Prohibition of Auto Parts, Machinery Rental shops, etc. After discussion, they accepted as is, which is unchanged from existing.
18. (4.13) Multiple mark-ups on storm water management - discussed and explained that we received editing direct from Carmella – they accepted that.
19. I asked about removal of golf courses and air strips – they confirmed agreement.
20. Markups and changes proposed for Junk and Junk Vehicles – I explained the language was exactly per the current ORC – they accepted.
21. Several comments about what was the action if resident did not comply to “have xx days to correct/finish” – I explained that there is a process involving first Shane and then county. They accepted.
22. Comments about publishing minutes and other items on the Township website – we say may be published – they want shall be published. I explained that we additionally had to follow ORC to publish notice in newspapers, etc.

23. I asked about next steps – did they want reply to each comment? They requested and opportunity to read a rewrite before we go to public meeting and county.
24. They were concerned about the listing of duties of Zoning Inspector – Shane said was generally in line, but we should review.
25. Jim asked about Mother-in-law suites, and asked that we review our language for clarity.
26. Chistina asked that we review language about non-conforming situation as in what can be rebuilt after a fire.